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## THE DAWN OF A NEW RELIGIOUS ERA.

THE Parliament of Religions, which sat in Chicago from September 11 to September 27, was a great surprise to the world. When the men who inaugurated it invited representatives of all the great religions of the earth to meet in conference, their plan was looked upon with misgiving, if not with ridicule. The feasibility and the advisability of their undertaking were doubted. The greatest and most powerful churches, it was said, would not be represented. The Vatican, for instance, regards the Roman Catholic Church as the only soul-saving power, with exclusive authority to loose or bind. To allow a comparison between it and other churches on a footing of equality, to appeal to reason, to provoke and favor such an appeal, or to submit to a decision after argument, would be tantamount to the recognition of reason, or logic, or science, as a higher and the highest test of truth. Like reasons, it was thought, would more or less influence other denominations, for almost all of them claim to be based upon a special divine revelation which is above argument, so as to render the mere doubt of it sin.

In spite of all these doubts and fears, the Parliament of Religions was convened, and it proved an ex-

traordinary success. The work grew rapidly under the hands of its promoters, so that the time originally allotted to it had to be increased until it extended over seventeen days. Although discussion had been excluded from the programme so as to avoid friction, it could not be entirely controlled. Nevertheless a good spirit presided over all the sessions, so that criticism promoted a closer agreement and united men of different faiths more strongly in bonds of mutual respect and toleration. The multitudes that filled the halls at the closing session were animated with a feeling that the Parliament had not lasted long enough, that a movement had been inaugurated which was as yet only a beginning that needed further development, and that we should stay and continue the work, until the mustard-seed we were planting should become a tree under whose branches the birds of the heavens might find a dwelling-place.

The idea of holding a parliament of religions is not new. It was proposed and attempted on a smaller basis in former times by Asiatic rulers. It has been predicted and longed for by men of different races and various religions. Of European authors we may mention Volney who in his "Ruins" describes minutely how "men of every race and every region, the European in his short coat, the Asiatic in his flowing robes, the African with ebony skin, the Chinese dressed in silk, assemble in an allotted place to form a great religious congress."

It is certain that similar ideas have stirred the hearts of many. The Shinto High Priest of the Japanese State Church, the Rt. Rev. Reuchi Shibata in one of his speeches said : "Fourteen years ago I expressed in my own country the hope that there would be a

friendly meeting of the world's religionists, and now I realise my hope with great joy in being able to attend this phenomenal congress."

It is but natural that this sentiment should prevail in Japan where three religions, which closely considered are by no means compatible, exist peacefully side by side. The ancient nature worship of Shinto was not exterminated when the doctrines of Confucius were preached and accepted, and the Buddhists wage no war on either. Many families of Japan conform to the official ceremonies of Shinto; they even respect its popular superstitions, and have their children taught the precepts of the great Chinese sage as set forth in the book of rites and other sacred writings, while they themselves seek consolation for the deeper yearnings of their souls in the wisdom of Buddha. There are for these three religions shrines side by side in their homes and in their hearts.

All uncertainty as to the feasibility of the gathering vanished when the Roman Catholic Church most cordially accepted the invitation to take part. "We, as the mother of all Christian churches," said Bishop Keane, in his extemporaneous and unpublished farewell address, "have a good right to be represented. Why should we not come?" And nearly all the other denominational representatives thought as he did. Whether or not it was consistent with traditional orthodoxy, they came none the less. So powerful was the desire for a religious union, representatives of the broadest as well as of the narrowest views met in fraternal co-operation on the same platform. You could see such an evangelist as Joseph Cook sitting by the side of liberal clergymen, such as Jenkin Lloyd Jones, of Chicago, and E. L. Rexford, of Boston. And these

Christians again exchanged cordial greetings with the pagan Hindus and the atheistic Buddhists ; an unprecedented spectacle !

And it was a spectacle in the literal sense of the word. In accord with American simplicity, the men of this country appeared in their every-day attire and our European guests wisely followed their example. Nevertheless, the sight was often picturesque. Cardinal Gibbons, when he delivered the prayer at the opening of the first public session, wore his official crimson robes. The prelates of the Greek Church, foremost among them the Most Rev. Dionysios Latas, Archbishop of Zante, looked very venerable in their sombre vestments and Greek cylindrical hats. The Shinto High Priest Shibata was dressed in a flowing garment of white, decorated with curious emblems, and on his head was a strangely-shaped cap wrought apparently of black jet, from the top of which nodded mysteriously a feather-like ornament of unknown significance. Pung Quang Yu, a tall and stout man, an adherent of Confucius, and the authorised representative of the Celestial Empire, appeared in Chinese dress. There were present several Buddhist bishops of Japan, in dress which varied from violet to black. The turbaned Hindu monk, Swami Vivekananda, in a long, orange gown, who, as we were informed, lived in voluntary poverty so that as a rule he did not know where he would receive his next day's meal ; Dharma-pâla, the Ceylonese Buddhist, in his robe of white ;—these and many more were the exceedingly interesting men who appeared upon the stage and spoke their minds freely on subjects over which in former ages cruel wars were waged. Differences not only of religious opinions but also of races were represented in

the Congress. Bishop B. W. Arnet, of the African Methodist Episcopal Church, confessed that the brotherhood of man had for the first time been taken seriously. When introduced, he said, "I am to represent the African, and have been invited to give color to the Parliament of Religions." Interrupted by a storm of merriment, he continued, "But I think the Parliament is already very well colored, and if I have eyes, I think the color is this time in the majority."

The Parliament of Religion was, I repeat, a great spectacle; but it was more than that. There was a purport in it. It powerfully manifested the various religious yearnings of the human heart, and all these yearnings exhibited a longing for unity and mutual good understanding. How greatly they mistake who declare that mankind is drifting toward an irreligious future! It is true that people have become indifferent about theological subtleties, but they still remain and will remain under the sway of religion; and the churches are becoming more truly religious, as they are becoming less sectarian.

There are two kinds of Christianity. One is love and charity; it wants the truth brought out and desires to see it practically applied in daily life. It is animated by the spirit of Jesus and tends to broaden the minds of men. The other is pervaded with exclusiveness and bigotry; it does not aspire through Christ to the truth; but takes Christ, as tradition has shaped his life and doctrines, to be the truth itself. It naturally lacks charity and hinders the spiritual growth of men. The latter kind of Christianity has always been looked upon as the orthodox and the only true Christianity. It has been fortified by Bible passages, formulated in Quinquages, indorsed by decisions of œcumenical councils

and by papal bulls. Tracts privately distributed among the visitors to the Congress contained quotations such as, "Though we or an angel from heaven preach any other Gospel unto you than that we have preached unto you, let him be accursed"; and "He that believeth not shall be condemned." Without using the same harsh terms, Saint Peter expressed himself not less strongly, in a speech before the Jews concerning Jesus of Nazareth, saying: "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under the heaven given among men whereby we must be saved."

There were a few voices heard at the Parliament of Religions which breathed this narrow and so-called orthodox Christianity, but they could hardly be regarded as characterising the spirit of the whole enterprise. They really served as a contrast by which the tolerant principles of our Oriental guests shone the more brightly. "The Hindu fanatic," said Vivekananda, "burns himself on the pyre, but he never lights the fagots of an Inquisition"; and we were told that Buddha said to his disciples, "I forbid you to believe anything simply because I said it." Even Mohammedanism, generally supposed to be the most authoritative of all religions, appeared mild and rational as explained by Mohammed Alexander Russell Webb. Mr. Webb said: "The day of blind belief has passed away. Intelligent humanity wants a reason for every belief, and I say that that spirit is commendable and should be encouraged, and it is one of the prominent features of the spirit of Islam." At one of the meetings a prayer was offered for those blind heathen who attended the Congress, that God might have mercy on them and open their eyes, so that they would see their own errors and accept the truth of Christianity; but

the prayer, made in the spirit of the old bigoted Christianity which believes in the letter and loses the spirit, found an echo neither in the hearts of our foreign guests nor among the men who had convened the Congress nor among the audience who listened to the prayer. Far from being converted, the heathen delegates took the opportunity of denouncing Christian missionaries for their supercilious attitude and for making unessential things essential. For instance, the missionaries, they said, demand that the Hindus abolish caste, and treat the refusal to eat meat as a pagan prejudice, so that in the Hindu mind "Christian" has come to mean "carnivorous." One of the delegates, a Brahman layman, said: "With the conqueror's pride they cannot bring themselves down, or rather cannot bring themselves up to practise the humility which they preach." B. B. Nagarkar, of Bombay, expressed himself more guardedly. Said he :

"Sad will be the day for India when Christian missionaries cease to come ; for we have much to learn about Christ and Christian civilisation. They do some good work. But if converts are the measures of their success, we have to say that their work is a failure. Little do you dream that your money is expended in spreading abroad nothing but Christian dogmatism, Christian bigotry, Christian pride, and Christian exclusiveness. I entreat you to expend one-tenth only of your vast sacrifices in sending out to our country unsectarian, broad missionaries who will devote their energy to educating our men and women. Educated men will understand Christ better than those whom you convert to the narrow creed of some cant Christianity."

The severest rebuke came from the lips of the representative of Jainism, and from the monk Vivekananda. The latter denounced Christian missionaries for offering stones instead of bread. They build churches, he said, and preach sectarian creeds which



benefit no one. They despise the sacred traditions of the Hindu, the profundity of which they are unable to fathom ; and, he added, "What shall we think of a religion whose missionaries distribute food in a famine to the starving people on the condition of conversion?"

These were hard reproaches, yet they were accepted by the Christians with good grace.\* The Rev. R. G. Hume of India said, "We are willing to have our Bud-

\* This passage was much commented upon in various newspapers and religious journals, and it appears that the writer's attitude has been misunderstood.

That several hard reproaches "were accepted by the Christians with good grace" is not a slight, not a rebuke, but a praise. It is very doubtful whether a Mohammedan or any other but a Christian audience would have been so patient as to listen good-naturedly to similar censures. Forbearance is always a symptom of strength. None but the strong can afford to be generous and tolerant. Compare p. 18, lines 13-18 of this article.

Among the comments that came to our notice the *National Baptist* of November 23 discusses Vivekananda's statement under the caption, "A False Accusation." Dr. S. W. Duncan writes: "I hope Bishop Keane's denunciation was honest and not a covert fling at Protestants. . . . I suspect if the Hindu monk had told the whole truth, all he knew, he would have been compelled to mention by name Roman Catholics. Dr. Bunker has recently given me instances of his being frustrated in his work by Catholic priests preceding him in heathen villages, and buying up the chiefs, giving them money and other considerations of weight with heathen, for their acceptance of crucifixes and Romish rites and enrollment as Catholics. I have made inquiry, and there is not on record a single intimation that any one of our missionaries has ever thus abused his holy calling."

We have a good opinion of Baptist missions, and know at the same time that Roman Catholic missionaries, among them the much-reviled Jesuits, have shown an admirable devotion to the cause of their religion.

Supposing Vivekananda's accusation to be true of some Christian missionaries, we do not take it to mean a wholesale condemnation of all. Nor do we wish to pour cold water upon the missionary zeal. The missionary spirit is the index of the spiritual life of a religion, and we are glad to see it in Buddhists not less than in Christians. But we are sorry that the broad religious spirit which pervaded the Parliament and is present among the Unitarians and other liberal institutions, is too weak to undertake any great propaganda for their cause. How much more effective would Christian missionaries be if they taught religion instead of dogmas, and love of truth instead of blind faith.

*The Louisville Record* of November 30 calls Vivekananda's statement slander, and adds: "When will we get over the harm done by the World's Parliament of Religions?" This reminds us of the parable of the sower, where Christ says: "Some [seeds] fell upon stony ground."

dhistic and Brahman friends tell us how we can do better. Any one who will help us to be more humble and more wise will do us good and we will thank him whoever he be." And Bishop Keane, Rector of the Roman Catholic University at Washington, was not lacking in this broad religious spirit. "I indorse," said the Bishop, impressively, "the denunciation hurled against the system of pretended charity that offered food to the hungry Hindus at the cost of their conscience and their faith. It is a shame and disgrace to all who call themselves Christians. And if Vivekananda by his criticism can only stir us and sting us into better teachings and better doings in the great work of Christ, I for one shall be profoundly grateful to our friend the great Hindu monk."

This is the true catholicity of the religion of mankind, and coming from the lips of a Roman Catholic bishop, it did not fail to find a joyous and powerful response in the audience. To the honor of our Hindu friends we have to add that the fairness and impartial love of justice with which their remarks were accepted by a Christian audience, as well as by their Christian brethren on the platform, were unhesitatingly recognised. Said one of them, "The tolerance, the kindness, nay, the patience with which you listen to the enumeration of your faults, this sympathy with the wrong done to heathendom by Christianity, makes me believe that we have all advanced and are advancing wonderfully."

Heretofore, the broad Christianity has always been regarded as heretical; but as this Parliament proves, times have changed. Judging from what we witnessed at Chicago, the official representatives of almost all religions speak a new language. The narrowness of past

ages is now felt to be due to imperfect views of the truth, and we recognise the duty to pass beyond it to a higher and grander conception. There are still representatives of the narrow spirit left, but their position becomes more and more untenable. What does it matter that previous œcumenical councils did not stand upon a broad platform? Does not religion grow? Was the present Parliament of Religions not œcumenical? And has the holy spirit of religious progress ceased to be a presence in mankind? If ever any council was œcumenical, it was this gathering at Chicago; and although no resolutions were passed, there were a certain harmony in matters of faith and a consciousness of that which is essential, such as were never manifested before.

The narrow Christianity will disappear, for its errors have become palpable. There are still remaining some prophets of the trust in a blind faith, but their influence is on the wane. Liberals are inclined to suspect the motives of the believers in the letter, but they judge without charity. The narrow-minded Christian dogmatists are neither false nor hypocritical, for we have ample evidence of their earnestness and their simple-minded piety. Yet they are mistaken. They are deficient in insight and they lack in understanding. We shall have to educate them and teach them that the gentle spirit of Christ is not with them, but marches on with the progressive part of mankind to the planes of a higher evolution.

We all of us have learned much during these congresses. Our foreign guests have learned to know Christianity better than it appeared to them in the conduct of Christians and in sermons and Sunday-schools, and we in turn have learned to respect not only the

love of truth and earnestness of pagans, but also their philosophical capacity.

The narrow Christianity was represented by a few speakers and the audience endured them with great patience ; but we can fairly ignore them here ; for there is no need of reviewing or recapitulating sermons which every one who desires can enjoy in our various orthodox churches. Dr. Briggs represented progressive theology and insisted that religion must face the criticism of science. The Rev. Mr. Mozoomdar is the leader of a similar movement in India. The Brahmo Somaj, which he and the able Secretary of the Association, Mr. B. B. Nagarkar of Bombay, represented, may be characterised as Hindu Unitarianism. Max Müller and Henry Drummond sent brief papers which showed the warm sympathy of the authors and their substantial agreement with the spirit of the Parliament of Religions.

It is impossible to analyse the details of the various views presented ; but a few quotations from the speeches of our heathen friends whom we had not the pleasure of meeting before, will not be out of place.

Vivekananda explained the central idea of the Vedas as follows :

“ I humbly beg to differ from those who see in monotheism, in the recognition of a personal God apart from nature, the acme of intellectual development. I believe it is only a kind of anthropomorphism which the human mind stumbles upon in its first efforts to understand the unknown. The ultimate satisfaction of human reason and emotion lies in the realisation of that universal essence which is the All. And I hold an irrefragable evidence that this idea is present in the Veda, the numerous gods and their invocations notwithstanding. This idea of the formless All, the Sat, i. e., *esse*, or Being called *Âtman* and *Brahman* in the Upanishads, and further explained in the *Darsanas*, is the central idea of the Veda, nay, the root idea of the Hindu religion in general.”

On another occasion the same speaker dwelt on the idea of this panentheism with reference to the soul. Though recognising law in the world, he repudiated materialism. The soul has tendencies, he said, and these tendencies have been caused by past actions in former incarnations. Science explains everything by habits, and habits are acquired by repetition. That we do not remember the acts done in our previous states of existence is due to the fact that consciousness is the surface only of the mental ocean, and our past experiences are stored in its depths. The wheel of causation rushes on, crushing everything in its way, and waits not for the widow's tear or the orphan's cry. Yet there is consolation and hope in the idea that the soul is immortal and we are children of eternal bliss. The Hindu refuses to call men sinners; he calls them "children of immortal bliss." Death means only a change of centre from one body to another. He continued :

"The Vedas proclaim, not a dreadful combination of unforgiving laws, not an endless prison of cause and effect, but that, at the head of all these laws, in and through every particle of matter and force, stands One through whose command the wind blows, the fire burns, the clouds rain, and death stalks upon the earth. And what is his nature? He is everywhere, the pure and formless one, the Almighty and the All-merciful. 'Thou art our Father, thou art our mother, thou art our beloved friend, thou art the source of all strength. Thou art He that beareth the burdens of the universe; help me bear the little burden of this life.' Thus sang the Rishis of the Veda. And how to worship him? Through love. 'He is to be worshipped as the one beloved, dearer than everything in this and in the next life.' "

The breadth of Vivekananda's religious views appeared when he said :

"The same light shines through all colors, and in the heart of everything the same truth reigns. The Lord has declared to the

Hindu in his incarnation as Krishna, 'I am in every religion, as the thread through a string of pearls, and wherever thou seest extraordinary holiness and extraordinary power raising and purifying humanity know ye that I am there.'

Parseeism, the noble religion of Zarathustra, received scholarly treatment by Jinanji Jamshedji Modi who repudiated its dualism and represented it as pure monotheism, while he satisfactorily explained the symbolism of the sacred fire. In this way almost every religion was raised to a higher standpoint, than it is usually understood to have, by its representatives, and even idolatry found adroit champions in the Congress.

Said Vivekananda :

"It may be said without the least fear of contradiction that no Indian idolator, as such, believes the piece of stone, metal, or wood before his eyes to be his god in any sense of the word. He takes it only as a symbol of the all-pervading Godhood, and uses it as a convenient object for purposes of concentration, which being accomplished, he does not hesitate to throw it away."

Prince Momolu Massaquoi, son of a native king from the Wey Territory of the West Coast of Africa, a fine-looking youth of good education, which he had received in an American college after his conversion to Christianity, spoke in the same way with Vivekananda concerning the idolatry of African natives.

Mohammedanism, in addition to its representation by Moslems, was critically reviewed by the Rev. George Washburn, President of Robert College, Constantinople, who showed its points of contact and disagreement with Christianity. He quoted passages from the Koran which, in contrast to Mr. Webb's exposition, prove the exclusiveness of Mohammed's religion. The third sura, for instance, declares :

"Whoever followeth any other religion than Islam, shall not be accepted, and at the last day he shall be of those that perish !"

Dr. Washburn's quotation from the Koran reminds us of similar passages in the New Testament ; the old orthodoxy of the Moslems, however, is giving way to broader views. *Tout comme chez nous!* Dr. Washburn quoted the following Mohammedan hymn, composed by Shereef Hanoom, a Turkish lady of Constantinople, and translated by the Rev. H. O. Dwight, which reminds us strongly of our best modern Christian poetry:

"O source of kindness and of love,  
O give us aid or hopes above,  
'Mid grief and guilt although I grope,  
From thee I'll ne'er cut off my hope,  
My Lord, O my Lord !

"Thou King of Kings, dost know my need,  
Thy pardoning grace, no bars can heed ;  
Thou lov'st to help the helpless one  
And bid'st his cries of fear be gone,  
My Lord, O my Lord !

"Shouldst thou refuse to still my fears,  
Who else will stop to dry my tears?  
For I am guilty, guilty still,  
No other one has done so ill,  
My Lord, O my Lord !

"The lost in torment stand aghast,  
To see this rebel's sins so vast ;  
What wonder, then, that Shereef cries  
For mercy, mercy, ere she dies,  
My Lord, O my Lord !"

Prof. Minas Tchéráz, an Armenian Christian, when sketching the history of the Armenian Church, said sarcastically that real Mohammedanism was quite different from the Islam represented by Mr. Webb. This may be true, but Mr. Webb might return the compliment and say that true Christianity as it showed itself in deeds such as the Crusades, is quite different from

that ideal which its admirers claim it to be. Similar objections, that the policy of Christian nations showed very little the love and meekness of Jesus, were indeed made by Mr. Hirai, a Buddhist of Japan. We Christians have reason enough to be charitable in judging others.

Buddhism was strongly represented by delegates from Ceylon, Siam, and Japan. H. R. H. Chandradat Chudhadharn, Prince of Siam, sent a paper which contained a brief exposition of Buddhistic principles. There are four noble truths according to Buddha. These are (1) the existence of suffering; (2) the recognition of ignorance as the cause of suffering; (3) the extinction of suffering by the cessation of the three kinds of lust arising from ignorance; and (4) the eight paths that lead to the cessation of lust. These eight paths constitute the way of salvation and are (1) right understanding; (2) right resolutions; (3) right speech; (4) right acts; (5) the right way of earning a livelihood; (6) right efforts; (7) right meditation; and (8) the right state of the mind. The Japanese Buddhists are men of philosophical depth and genius, and might have made a deeper impression than they did if they had been more familiar with Western thought. They left, however, behind them a number of pamphlets for free distribution by the Bukkyo Gakkuwai, a society at Tokio whose sole purpose is the propagation of Buddhism.\* The missionary zeal of the Japa-

\* These are the titles of the Japanese missionary tracts in my possession: *Outlines of the Mahâyâna as taught by Buddha*, by S. Kuroda, Superintendent of Education of the Jôdo-Sect; *The Sutra of Forty-two Sections and Two Other Short Sutras*, translated from the Chinese originals (The Buddhist Propagation Society: Kyoto, Japan, 1892); *A Shin-Shiu Catechism*, by S. Kato of the Hongwanjiha of the Shin-Shiu sect of Japan (The Buddhist Propagation Society, Kyoto, Japan, 1893); *The Skeleton of a Philosophy of Religion*, by the Rev. Prof. M. Tokunaga, translated by Zenshiro Noguchi (Tokio, Kawai Bunkodo



nese Buddhists shows that there is life in Buddhism. The Rt. Rev. Ashitsu concluded his article on the teachings of Buddha with the following words :

"You know very well that our sunrise island of Japan is noted for its beautiful cherry-tree flowers. But you do not know that our country is also the kingdom where the flowers of truth are blooming in great beauty and profusion at all seasons. Visit Japan, and do not forget to take home with you the truth of Buddhism. All hail the glorious spiritual spring-day, when the song and odor of truth invite you all out to our country for the search of holy paradise!"

One quotation from the Japanese missionary tracts will suffice to prove that the ancient teachings of Gautama are still preserved among his adherents of the present generation of Japan. In "The Sutra of Forty-two Sections" we read on page 3 :

"Buddha said : If a man foolishly does me wrong, I will return to him the protection of my ungrudging love. The more evil comes from him, the more good shall go from me. The fragrance of goodness always comes to me, and the harmful air of evil goes to him. . . .

"Buddha said : A wicked man who reproaches a virtuous one is like one who looks up and spits at heaven ; the spittle soils not the heaven, but comes back and defiles his own person. So again, he is like one who flings dust at another when the wind is contrary, the dust will return to him who threw it. The virtuous man cannot be hurt, and the misery that the other would inflict falls back on himself."

The Parliament of Religions is undoubtedly the most noteworthy event of this decade. What are the World's Fair and its magnificent splendor in comparison with it? Or what the German Army Bill, the Irish

& Co., 1893); *Outlines of the Doctrine of the Nichiren Sect*, by Nissatsu Arai, the lately lamented Dai-sōjō. With the life of Nichiren, the founder of the Nichiren Sect, edited by the Central Office of the Nichiren Sect, Tokio, Japan, A. D. 1893.

Home Rule Bill in England and its drastic episodes in the House of Parliament, or a change of party in the United States? It is evident that from its date we shall have to begin a new era in the evolution of man's religious life.

It is difficult to understand the pentecost of Christianity which took place after the departure of Christ from his disciples. But this Parliament of Religions was analogous in many respects, and it may give us an idea of what happened at Jerusalem nearly two thousand years ago. A holy intoxication overcame the speakers as well as the audience; and no one can conceive how impressive the whole proceeding was, unless he himself saw the eager faces of the people and imbibed the enthusiasm that enraptured the multitudes.

Any one who attended these congresses must have felt the thrill of the divine spirit that was moving through the minds of the congregation. We may rest assured that the event is greater than its promoters ever dreamed of. They builded better than they knew. How small are we mortal men who took an active part in the Parliament in comparison with the movement which it inaugurated! And this movement indicates the extinction of the old narrowness and the beginning of a new era of broader and higher religious life.

It is proposed that another Parliament of Religions be convened in the year 1900 at the ancient city of Bombay, where we may find a spiritual contrast between the youngest city and the oldest, and pay a tribute from the daughter to the mother. Other appropriate places for Religious Parliaments would be Jerusalem, the Holy City of three great religions, or some port of Japan where Shintoism, Confucianism, Buddhism, and Christianity peacefully develop side by

side, exhibiting conditions which invite a comparison fair to all?

Whether or not the Parliament of Religions be repeated, whether or not its work will be continued,\* the fact remains that this congress at Chicago will exert a lasting influence upon the religious intelligence of mankind. It has stirred the spirits, stimulated mental growth, and given direction to man's further evolution. It is by no means an agnostic movement, for it is carried on the wings of a religious faith and positive certainty. It is decidedly a child of the old religions, and Christianity is undoubtedly still the leading star. That the faults of Christianity have been more severely rebuked than those of any other religion should not be interpreted to mean that the others are in every respect better, for the censure is but a sign that points to the purification of Christianity. The dross is discarded, but the gold will remain.

The religion of the future, as the opinions presented indicate, will be that religion which can rid itself of all narrowness, of all demand for blind subordination, of the sectarian spirit, and of the Phariseism which takes it for granted that its own devotees alone are good and holy, while the virtues of others are but polished vices. The religion of the future cannot be a creed upon which the scientist must turn his back, because it is irreconcilable with the principles of science. Religion must be in perfect accord with science; for

\* It may be well to add, and those who are interested in the religious development of mankind may be glad to know, that the work of the Parliament of Religions may be continued. Under Mr. Bonney's direction a local committee has been formed among the members of which are Dr. Thomas, Dr. Gilbert, Dr. Dellano, Mr. M. M. Snell, Mrs. Harbert, and the writer of this article. The committee is in connexion with advisory councils all over the world, and it has been decided to name the new movement "The World's Religious Parliament Extension."

science—and I mean here not the private opinions and hypotheses of single scientists—is not an enterprise of human frailty. Science is divine, and the truth of science is a revelation of God. Through science God speaks to us ; by science he shows us the glory of his works ; and in science he teaches us his will.\*

“We love science,” said a Catholic priest, of Paris, at one of the sessions in the scientific section, when protesting against a thoughtless remark of a speaker who broadly accused the clergy of being opposed to science. “We love science,” Father D’Arby said, emphatically; “the office of science in religion is to prune it of fantastic outgrowths. Without science religion would become superstition.”

The human soul consists of two elements, self and truth. Self is the egotistical desire of being some independent little deity, and truth is the religious longing for making our soul a dwelling-place of God. The existence of self is an illusion ; and there is no wrong in this world, no vice, no sin except what flows from the assertion of self. Truth has a wonderful peculiarity: it is inexhaustible, and it, likewise, demands a constantly renewed application. An increase of knowledge involves always an increase of problems that entice the inquiring mind to penetrate deeper and deeper into the mysteries of being, and, however serious and truth-loving we may have been, there is always occasion to be more faithful in the attendance to our obligations and daily duties. Self shrivels our hearts ; truth makes them expand ; and the ultimate aim of re-

\* This view of a religion of science was presented by the writer before the Parliament in an address entitled *Science a Religious Revelation* (published in pamphlet form by the Open Court Publishing Co.)

ligion is to eliminate self and let man become an embodiment of truth, an incarnation of God.

We must welcome the light from whatever source it comes, and we must hail the truth wherever we find it. There is but one religion, the religion of truth. There is but one piety, it is the love of truth. There is but one morality, it is the earnest desire of leading a life of truth. And the religion of the future can only be the Religion of Truth.